

Inclusive Education in Primary and Secondary Schools of Pakistan: Role of Teachers

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Abstract

The study intends to examine the implementation of inclusive education in the schools of Islamabad, Pakistan. There is an insufficient knowledge regarding inclusion, moreover there are various challenges which include lack of knowledge on inclusion, attitudes of teachers and a need for adequate resources so that inclusive education can be implemented. In different parts of the world the mainstream schools are striving to ensure the inclusion of students with disabilities. A Qualitative Study was being carried out in order to get the viewpoint of students and teachers from primary and secondary schools regarding the knowledge on implementing inclusive education. The environment of the regular classes needs to be made conducive so that the students with disabilities are able to become a part. A lot of work is required to be done regarding the infrastructure development so that the schools can be made accessible for such students. Efforts regarding training of the teachers, counselling of the students, providing facilities in the classrooms, and advocacy on inclusive education need to be ensured. There is also a need to research in the context of Pakistan, so that there is a substantial understanding of the aspect and its practical implications. The research study will be valuable giving an insight of inclusion in terms of education in Pakistan. Furthermore, the study also hopes to make a remarkable support for the understanding of inclusive education in schools of Pakistan by recognizing the needs which are required to be considered so that it can be practiced. It will also be helpful in contributing to the literature on inclusive education for future research to be conducted on the subject.

Keywords: Inclusive; Education; Teachers.

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1. Introduction

1.1 Literature Review and Summary of the Problem

Inclusion is the act of being a part of a group or structure and to share within that system. Many people whose abilities are not recognized and are often ignored start to feel that their rights are not protected. In order to accommodate such people there is a need of a conducive environment which can encourage them as a part of the conventional structure of the society. It is generally accepted that "Inclusion" means inviting those who have been historically locked out to "come in". But there is a weakness in this definition as it is necessary to get to know that who can include the persons with disabilities and who has the right to exclude them from the system. It is the responsibility of all the individuals to ensure the inclusion of persons with disabilities in all walks of life and to make them a substantial part of the society.

The story of a black woman Rosa Parks which was heard in 1955 has been a source of inspiration for many. She was tired of being called a black woman who was never allowed to freely travel in bus as black and white people were segregated. One day Rosa occupied a seat in the compartment of the bus which was for the white people. When she was warned against her act she retaliated and as a result was arrested. But at that instance the history was questioned as Rosa was tired of getting excluded every time and stood up for her right.

Inclusion is to recognize that all the human beings are one even though they have their own set of strengths and weaknesses. It is a term which enables in fighting against the curse of inclusion which further gives rise to discrimination among the persons with disabilities and their non-disable peers. In order to ensure inclusion it is important to assure that there is a system of support and it is the social responsibility of the individuals in the society to work for inclusion [1].

There is a need to identify the themes which are the cooperation of the teachers, a culture which is collaborative, love, care, interest and participation of children and the also the interest of the parents and the community as a whole. These particular themes are much beyond the concepts of inclusion which are very limited at present. On the other hand an effort should be made to make inclusion extendable to a domain which is democratic leadership. Leadership cannot be carried out by one person rather it's an endeavor of the entire team of the institution. According to different roles of leadership inclusive education is more related to distributed leadership. In Cyprus a school in rural setting can also contribute towards the distribution of responsibilities in the school [2].

When there are discriminatory negative attitudes which implies towards prejudice on the basis of class, gender, class, religion and disability further act as barriers when they aim at the students. Language along with the communication can also act as barriers when the medium of instruction is not effective and appropriate to the students being imparted the knowledge. Same is the case when sign language is not provided for deaf learners and there is a lack of assistive devices or some other elaborate strategies employed for communication in the context of the non-speaking students. In accessible infrastructure there are barriers also when it is not built suiting the requirements of students with disabilities. Lack of cooperation from the parents is also one of the

factors which plays an important role in moving towards inclusive education [3].

To illustrate the concept of Inclusive Education and the challenges being faced in taking the steps in order to implement it within the South African context. It is important to consider the complex influences that have given rise to the transformation in education, which includes the shift from conceptualizing special needs within an individualistic approach which deals with the deficits in needs, towards the human rights approach within the social context. There is a specific history of injustice, imbalance and inequity for major population that have shaped the post-apartheid policy, moreover the fiscal constraints that the new government inherited in 1944. The theoretical frameworks have been based focusing the aspects of special needs, education and inclusive education [4].

Inclusive education is about giving response to diversity and to be open to new ideas, and giving power to all members of community and to celebrate difference in dignified ways. Achievement regarding educational equity for a group of learners will need a system that eliminates programme regarding special needs in categories. Moreover eliminates the distinction between regular and special education. This particular system would meet the requirements of the students and would also require professional people to personalize the methodology which would include problem solving and negotiation. Inclusive education needs a culture in the school which expresses the desire to define difference and similarity [5].

Creating inclusive schools should not concentrate just on the requirements of the students with disabilities but should be made a part of a broader context of difference and similarity. When social responses are being recognized and as a result cultures of difference are also considered among the schools, equity and the inclusion of students of disabilities could be further promoted. There is a possibility that these cultural structures of difference and success and the failure that are characterized in personal notions, attitudes and beliefs, and to shape how teachers relate with students. Reformers who are working for education need to be beyond understanding of the classroom environment and the learning outcomes which are proposed. There should be an understanding of the cultural and social setting of the institutions and the beliefs and values of teachers and others who deal with a multiple range of students in the schools [6].

Another of the philosophy on inclusive education is human rights and according to it acceptance of peer has to be one of the primary implications of schooling so that dignity and a better standard of life for students with disabilities is provided. In the U.S and other OECD countries, there has been a lot of advocacy carried out on inclusion, hence expressing the advantages of inclusion in academia and also providing the students with disabilities their social benefits [7].

The faith and the values which the principals had in terms of inclusion were multi-dimensional in nature. According to them on a general level inclusion is realizing the rights of persons with disabilities and making them the part of mainstream education. They agreed with the fact that schools proved to be the reflection of the society and hence it is very important on the part of the schools to inculcate a culture which would encourage tolerance for various diverse cultures in one setting. Diversity was being encouraged by them and for the purpose they showed respect towards the minority groups [8].

Useful practices in teaching include peer mediation, in which the student with challenging disabilities and peers who are non-disable develop a shared responsibility. The focus is on vision planning, developing relationships as a preventive strategy in order to instruct peers without disabilities. This will also enable how to respond to problem and to organize instructional groups so that the students with disabilities can learn from positive peer modelling and assistance. The behavior emphasized strategies which are useful in focusing challenging behavior as they have a positive effect on teachers in order to teach positive interdependence among peers without disabilities too [9].

A major problem which is in the field of disability is the lack of access to education for students with disabilities. Education is a fundamental right of all which has been documented in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and is protected by many international conventions and is quite a serious issue. In a number of countries there is a considerable difference in the educational opportunities which are being provided to the students with disabilities and those who are non-disable. It is not possible to work upon the goal of Education for All if we are not able to bring a change in the present situation [10].

A considerable number of children with disabilities are being excluded from provision of educational opportunities for primary and secondary schooling. There is a strong link between exclusion, poverty and disability. Education is recognized as means to develop human resource in order to bring an improvement in the economic performance, moreover to enhance the capabilities and choices of people. To get excluded from education can give rise to loss of freedom and the level of productivity in the labor market. The international community in the context of policy making has recognized that education is a fundamental right of every child and has committed to a strategy for an action which addresses this right [11].

Inclusive education improves the social structure and also enables to increase the opportunities to inculcate a positive environment. This can be done by the school leaders which include the staff and the management of the school. Inclusion can be implemented if the leaders raise awareness of the teachers regarding this term. It is very essential for the leaders to stay committed to the ideology of inclusion and hence develop behaviours that help in promoting inclusion for the students which are faced with any type of disability. In addition leaders should inculcate in the mindsets of the teachers a clear understanding of what inclusion is. There should be a support system for the staff of the school by the leaders in making them understand their responsibilities to guide the underprivileged students. Another duty of the teachers is that they promote diversity among all the students and do not isolate any of the students on the basis of any shortcoming. These leaders also prove to cement the relationships between the schools and the communities [12].

The classroom teachers play quite an important role in facilitating positive discussions among the disable and non-disable students. In order to promote positive discussion in the classrooms the teachers need to have a positive demeanour or attitudes towards students with special needs and a strong sense of self efficacy. All these variables are linked to good classroom practices with reference to facilitating interactions and using adaptive way of instruction. Teacher's self-efficacy is considered to be a very strong predictor of classroom practices. There is a link between teaching practices and the social status of students with disabilities in mainstream classrooms. These factors have a great effect on how the peers behave and interact when accommodative

practices are carried out in the class that shape the social status which includes the acceptance and rejection of students with disabilities among their peer students without disabilities in the mainstream classroom[13].

In order to implement effective inclusive practices it is necessary to have a set of behaviours, activities and discussions on the part of various professionals which include principals and teachers. These behaviours, activities and interactions are influenced by the attitudes of the educators towards inclusive education along with their knowledge of the requirements for new practices to be introduced on inclusive education and subjective norms which include the expectations of the principals [14].

Parents, teachers and the advocates of the students with disabilities have promoted inclusion as a way of challenging the limitations to the level of access and participation being imposed by the current models of mainstreaming and integration. There has been a threshold to the regular education classrooms. Some students are not able to cross it due to the nature and severity of the disability. In order to meet the needs of the students with disabilities in an effective manner requires an adequate allocation of resources. This can only be ensured by applying a pedagogical approach which requires the students to participate in activities outside the classroom [15].

It is difficult to teach in an effective manner to a class of over thirty students with more than one student who is challenged. The challenges can be speech difficulty and those who need braille. There is a need to invest half of the time of school looking after these students and for the first time we are faced with the task to take care of such students who are in need of great help [16].

In adherence with attitude formation theories and the evidence from literature the results of this study were quite similar, that are experienced working with students with disabilities and the classes which had a small size had quite positive effect on their attitude towards inclusion [17].

On the other hand, a country like Ghana cannot be compared to countries like Norway and Canada. It has been generally observed that the teachers do not show an active participation in supporting their social life in the classroom and simultaneously outside the classrooms, thus it is a problem to find friends so that the students with disabilities can play and socialize with them. Socialization of students is not at the maximum level. According to research School is a system which transfers both formal and informal education. Without the formal education it is impossible to enhance the process of learning. Teachers are not able to understand that inclusion can bring the students close to curriculum of regular education and also gives the students special drive to progress [18].

It is noted that students' self-identity, self-awareness and self-esteem are created through linkages with others. To teach skills regarding socialization with different disabilities would help in increasing peer interaction in a conducive environment [19].

The issue of inclusion has been in the limelight for the recent times. At an initial level it was seen as an innovative concept in the domain of special education but at present it is being analyzed in a broader view. If we see the Ballard's (1997) definition of inclusive education. According to Ballard inclusive education includes a

number of factors. Education requires to be nondiscriminatory in case of disability, culture and gender, it involves all students in the community without any rarity, and students should have equal rights to share to have an access to the curriculum which is culturally valued. More importance should be given to diversity other than assimilation. In case of launching inclusion in education requires to involve two steps which are divided into culture and curricula. The process involves in which there is an increase in the participation of students within the cultures and curricula of mainstream education system and further comes the decreasing of exclusionary pressures [20].

To facilitate an environment of positive interaction teachers are required to have a positive demeanor and there should be an attitude of self-efficacy towards the students with disabilities. Good class room practices can only be functioned if there is a facilitating interaction and an adaptive system of instruction being followed by the teachers. Self-efficacy has also been observed as a very good indicator of teaching methodology applied in the classrooms [21].

Policy on inclusion is understood to be as a part of the human rights which includes access to and equity to education. There are a number of interpretations which include educational rights and how they should be evaluated. Teachers are required to be disabused about the concept that they are not specifically qualified to teach children with special needs. In reality they have an immense knowledge and many skills which are required to be taught to all the students. But they may lack the confidence to translate their knowledge into action so that the children who are faced with challenges can be helped. Teachers can be trained on “specialist pedagogy” and should be provided with guidance regarding the use of teaching strategies that can be beneficial to all the students in the classroom [22].

The field of education still needs clarity regarding the actions which need to be taken so that the policy and the practice can move forward. In few counties inclusive education is thought as an approach through which a children with special need can be taught but in the mainstream settings. At a global level it is seen to be as a form which supports and diversity amongst all the students. Aim of inclusive education is to eliminate social exclusion which has uprooted because of the attitudes and behaviours towards religion, gender, ability, race, ethnicity and social class. It initiates from the belief that education is a basic human right which is the foundation of a completely just society [23].

1.2 Research Problem

There is an insufficient knowledge pertaining to inclusion and its implementation in Schools of Pakistan. The challenges include lack of knowledge on inclusion, attitudes of teachers and need of adequate resources to implement inclusive education in schools. There is a need to take steps to implement Inclusive Education.

1.3 Theoretical Framework

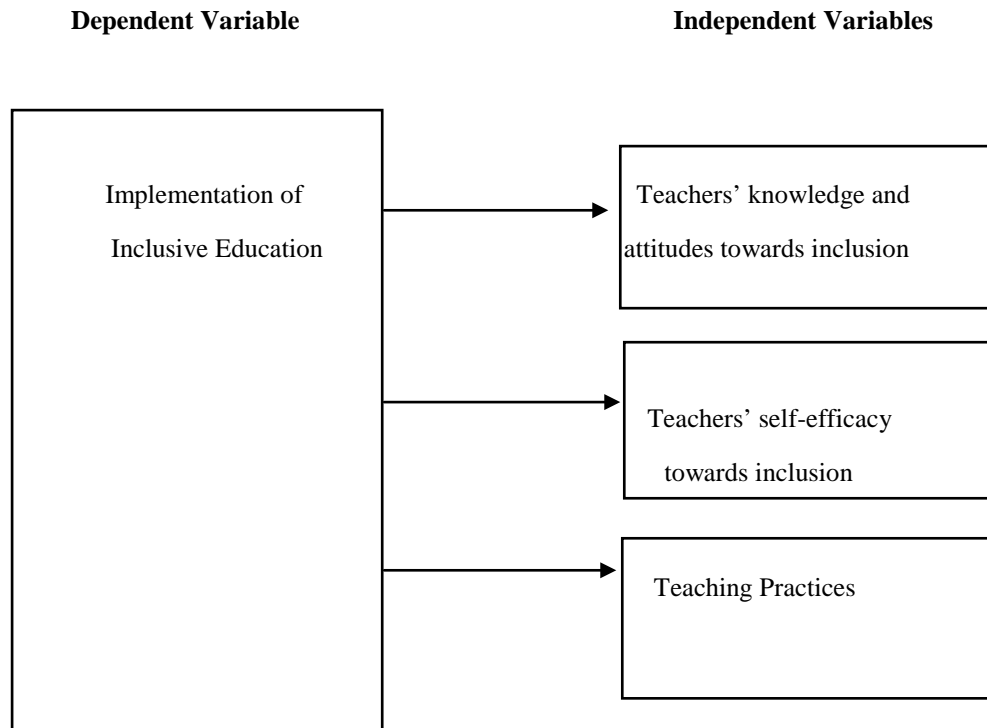


Figure 1

1.4 Approach

The approach to solve the problem which has been employed in the study is the Inductive Approach which is also known as inductive reasoning.

Meaning has been generated from the data collected in order to identify themes on the basis of which the data has been analyzed.

The problem which has been focused during the research is the implementation of inclusive education for the students with special needs. For the purpose teachers' knowledge and attitudes, teachers' self-efficacy towards inclusion and teaching practices were studied.

A qualitative study was conducted which was based on the interviews taken from the teachers and the students from the primary and secondary schools.

An in-depth analysis of both the teachers and students was conducted, of which a number of themes emerged. These themes further resulted in providing with the implications so that inclusive education can be implemented in the regular system of education.

2. Material and Methods

2.1 Description of the Study Site

Teachers and students of four (primary and secondary) schools in Islamabad and District Jhelum is the population frame of the study. Islamabad is the capital city of Pakistan, whereas Jhelum is a city situated in the province of Punjab in Pakistan.

2.2 Sampling Design

The sample selection technique that was used for this research was Purposive Sampling. A sample of 35 research participants which included 10 teachers and 10 students from urban area and 8 teachers and 7 students from rural area were selected respectively.

2.3 Analysis of Data

A sufficient information was gathered from the respondents which included 35 research participants (10 teachers and 10 students from urban area and 8 teachers and 7 students from rural area respectively).

During the research two inclusive students were identified in Islamabad out of which one was Polio affected and the other one was hearing impaired.

The information regarding the students was gathered from these particular students and also from their non-disable peers.

All the interviews were transcribed and the unstructured qualitative data was coded and further characterized. During the interview the respondents expressed their views in a flow which was carefully analyzed to avoid any repetition.

The requirement of the process of data collection was to get a deeper and a richer insight of the implementation of inclusive education in the context of schools of Pakistan.

The data which was collected from all the respondents was quite diverse in nature and needed to be brought in order.

For an in depth analysis there was a need of developing a relevance of the data with the area of study. In addition to bring coherence to the data being collected by the respondents sorting of the data was carried out.

For the purpose, the information was coded so that repetition of the ideas can be minimized. Key notes were taken during the interviews and were then converted to themes afterwards.

The themes were then further described focusing different issues with relevance to inclusive education.

Memoing took place during the data analysis along with the process of data collection, and coding. By the time the analysis took place the themes related to it got saturated and resulted in number of memos with a sufficient information.

Having done the coding, memoing and sorting the findings were documented by integrating them in a rational argument.

3. Results

After sorting of the gathered data from the respondents the themes which were developed are as follows.

Table 1: Themes and Description

S. No	Themes	Description
1	Lack of Awareness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lack of knowledge of teachers and students regarding inclusion;
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students with disabilities and non-disable students cannot be equal and there remains to be a discrimination.
2	Need of Advocacy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There is an inadequate amount of advocacy on inclusion;
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There is no acceptance for students with disabilities in various professions; Advocacy needs to be carried out at school, community and masses level.
3	Training of Teachers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teachers have a lack of knowledge on inclusion and there is a major requirement of their training;
4	Need of Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mobility of students with disabilities;
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lack of funds for implementation of inclusive education;
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inequitable compensation of teachers.
5	Inclusive Education Goals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Most of the students including the student with disability expressed their dreams and goals in life; Peers' involvement;
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To realize social responsibility.
6	Teaching Methodology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teaching practices are not inclusive;
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Group settings in class room.

Table 2: Students' Responses

Teacher A	"I am not aware of inclusive education which would aim the mainstreaming of students with disabilities in the mainstream education".
Teacher B	"The inclusion is only possible if we are made aware of its true meaning and significance of its implementation".
Teacher C	"People are not aware of inclusion of disable children in the mainstream education because there is an insufficient amount of advocacy".
Teacher D	"We need to be imparted trainings".
Teacher E	"Our administration should have good leadership skills."
Teacher F	"We do not have an accessible infrastructure".
Teacher G	"I desire to mainstream inclusive children in the regular education system and to make them a part of the society".
Teacher H	"The management and the teachers can make students inclusive which are faced with minor disabilities, not enormously challenged and are reluctant to go to a special education school".
Teacher I	"If I do any good for students with disabilities, I will be able to fulfil my social responsibility".
Non Disable Student	"There is a general perception among the society that persons with disabilities cannot be educated in the conventional system of education and often face discrimination."
Non Disable Student	"We can never imagine to make friends with our disable peers as they cannot be made a part of various activities taking place in the class. Keeping in mind their shortcomings it is better to socialize with non-disable peers'.
Non Disable Student	"Teachers do not know how to include students with disabilities".
Student with Disability	"I imitate the army soldier at home as my parents have bought me an army dress. When I impersonate an army man it makes me fulfil my desire to join army in future".
Student with Disability	"Studying for me is quite a challenge as I am treated as any other student."

The Themes and Description in Table 1 have been deliberated in detail as follows.

3.1 Theme 1: Lack of Awareness

The teachers and students during the research expressed their lack of knowledge regarding inclusion. One of the teachers expressed that, “I am not aware of inclusive education which would aim the mainstreaming of students with disabilities in the mainstream education. A non-disable student said “there is a general perception among the society that person with disabilities cannot be educated in the conventional system of education and often face discrimination.”

“The inclusion is only possible if we are made aware of its true meaning and significance of its implementation. We need awareness raising which can be effectively pursued through conducting awareness raising sessions focusing the aspect of inclusive education”, a teacher expressed.

A non-disable student expressed that “we can never imagine to make friends with our disable peers as they cannot be made a part of various activities taking place in the class. Keeping in mind their shortcomings it is better to socialize with non-disable peers’.

3.2 Theme 2: Advocacy of Inclusion

Another teacher said that, “People are not aware of inclusion of disable children in the mainstream education because there is an insufficient amount of advocacy of this term. The masses should be advocated that the students with disabilities are not a burden on the society as the knowledge about the inclusion of such children in the society tends to filter from advocacy being carried out to the masses. At the first stage when the masses are aware of the meaning and significance of inclusion only in that case the individuals in different professions would start to think about this issue. The advocacy should focus the fact that students with disabilities should be facilitated in different walks of life, in addition to this they should not only be accommodated in the academic institutions but also in different professions. Advocacy will be helpful in emphasizing the acceptance level towards these children so that they can further be accepted in fields like medicine, engineering, forces etc. This can only help to do away with the stigma of being disable and a burden on the society. Advocacy should be carried out at various levels”.

School Level

“At the school level to the teachers, management of the school and the peer non-disable students about inclusive education” said a teacher.

Community Level

Another teacher said that, “The advocacy should also be carried out at the community level which can be done by the teachers and management of the schools. They can spread the message of inclusion in their communities.”

Masses Level

“The advocacy should also be implemented for masses at large by arranging plays, speaking forums, radio programmes, articles in print media and text messages on inclusion”, mentioned one of the teachers.

3.3 Theme 3: Training of Teachers.

Teachers expressed their lack of knowledge on inclusion and expressed a major need for their training. One of the teachers was of the view that “till the time they are not trained to deal with inclusive children they are not able to include such children in the regular education system”.

A teacher expressed that” implementation of inclusive education in schools of Pakistan is not an easy task and an appropriate capacity building and facilities can only guide the teachers to show results. After they are imparted with training sessions with experts on students with disabilities, they can understand the meaning of inclusion and can ensure the mainstreaming of such children in their system. Once they are provided with the adequate training on the issue they will be able to educate the civil society through advocacy on inclusion where required.”

“Our teachers do not know how to include us in the group activities so that we are able to participate like others in the classroom”, expressed a student with disability.

3.4 Theme 4: Need of Resources

The teachers when interviewed also shared their reservations on implementing the inclusive education as there are insufficient resources to provide the adequate facilities. A teacher was of the opinion that “administrative team with strong leadership skills is imperative to the success of inclusive practices”. Furthermore management of the schools are key elements on the campus and they should accept all students with diversity “.

“Acceptance of the students with disabilities and the idea of mainstreaming them in the regular education system can only be practically achieved when the management of the school cooperates with the parents of these students. After the management of the school is sensitized about the importance of implementation of inclusive education then comes the need of generation of capital, human and infrastructural resources. For this developing linkages with philanthropists, patrons and organizations working for persons with disabilities is essential so that funds for inclusive education are generated”, a teacher expressed.

Besides availability of accessible infrastructure was also mentioned, as to have an accessible infrastructure is very important to accommodate inclusive children and this can only be done by the establishment of infrastructure which can enable such students to increase their accessibility towards schools. This may include the building of ramps for the children who are on wheel chairs and to educate blind or visually impaired students would require the availability and training in braille tactile. Moreover, the children who are hearing and speech impaired it is necessary to assess the level of their hearing and speech impairment so that they are dealt with accordingly”.

“There is a severe difficulty in the mobility of students with disabilities which is commonly observed everywhere in the society. A dedicated staff and an accessible infrastructure is required to deal with this particular problem and an added effort is required on part of the teachers in order to impart education to students with disabilities. Henceforth the teachers need to be compensated more than their existing compensation packages and should be given additional allowances and benefits. To achieve this objective the school would need an additional amount of financial resources so that the teachers and the management are compensated equitably”.

One of the non-disable student also expressed. ”A student with disability cannot access a school as there are no facilities for their mobility. Even if we are motivated to help the non-disable students we are unable to till there is a conducive infrastructure”.

3.5 Theme 5: Inclusive Education Goals

During the course of interview, the teachers and the students shared a number of goals to promote inclusion and to implement inclusive education. A teacher was of the opinion that “I desire to mainstream inclusive children in the regular education system and to make them a part of the society. Though implementation is a stupendous task and could not be possible without the necessary training and advocacy and only those students can be mainstreamed who are not faced with a major challenge. I can get them involved by arranging group activities in the class. If inclusive children are made to sit and play with their peers, then they can be made to feel an equal part of the society”.

“Furthermore mingling with their peers either in their classroom or outdoor co-curricular activities can inculcate in them the feeling of inclusion. This would eliminate the feeling of isolation and social out-casting and elevate their existence among others. The management and the teachers can make students inclusive which are faced with minor disabilities, not enormously challenged and are reluctant to go to a special education school as they do not consider their disability a major disability and want to become a part of the regular education system”, said a teacher.

Most of the students including the student with disability expressed their dreams and goals in life which was becoming a doctor, engineer or joining armed forces. A Student with Disability said that, “I imitate the army soldier at home as my parents have bought me an army dress. When I impersonate an army man it makes me fulfil my desire to join army in future”.

Another teacher expressed her enthusiasm as she thought that, “implementation of inclusive education in schools of Pakistan is my social responsibility which needs to be considered, I want to contribute as a conscientious human being to the society. If I do any good for students with disabilities, I will be able to fulfil my social responsibility through this noble act which I seek to work for in my lifetime”.

3.6 Theme 6: Teaching Methodology

“The teaching methodology which is practiced in schools at present is not inclusive, also therefore ignoring the

aspect of implementation of inclusive education. If all the students in the class are not involved in various activities which take place regardless of discrimination based on any kind of disability would ensure way forward towards the implementation of inclusive education”, expressed a teacher.

One of the teachers was of the viewpoint that the teachers are not equipped with the necessary teaching skills so that they can let the students with disabilities participate in their class rooms. Group activities need to be planned in the class room in such a manner that both students with disabilities and their non-disable peers are able to interact with each other removing the line of discrimination.

A student with disability expressed that “Studying for me is quite a challenge as I am treated as any other student. The teachers use the traditional methods of teaching. The activities which are conducted in the classroom are most of the time far beyond my understanding and when I cannot become a part I feel alone”.

4. Discussion

In Pakistani context, the teaching methodology which is practiced in schools at present is not inclusive, hence completely ignoring the aspect of inclusive education. If all the students in the class are involved in different activities which take place regardless of discrimination based on any kind of disability would ensure implementation of inclusive education. In addition, the teachers are not equipped with the necessary teaching skills so that they can include students with disabilities in their class rooms. Group activities need to be planned in the class room in such a manner that both students with disabilities and their non-disable peers are able to become a part.

The management of different schools have agreed over the fact that there should be an equal participation of the students with disabilities in the mainstream education. There is a major challenge without compromising upon the quality of education and the time of the non-disable peers. In addition to this for the teacher and the management there has been a great problem in dealing with blind students and students with severe disabilities.

In the present study availability of accessible infrastructure has been considered to be very important to accommodate inclusive children and this can only be done by the establishment of infrastructure which can enable such students to increase their accessibility towards schools which may include the building of ramps for the children who are on wheel chairs. In order to educate visually impaired students would require the training of the teachers in braille tactile. Moreover, the children whose hearing and speech is impaired it is necessary to assess the level of their hearing impairment so that they are dealt with accordingly. There is a severe difficulty in the mobility of students with disabilities for which not only an accessible infrastructure but also a designated staff is required which would assist the students in ensuring their accessibility.

In comparison to Pakistan at a global level, the teachers need to be compensated more than their existing compensation packages and should be given additional allowances and perquisites as an extraordinary effort is required on part of the teachers in order to impart education to students with disabilities. On other hand in the perspective of Cyprus there is an awareness of the teachers and the management on inclusive education and they are in the process of implementation. The government’s educational reform in Cyprus has been dominated by

effective teaching in mixed ability classes. After the publication of the UNESCO (1997) report which pointed out that the classrooms in Cyprus have to be organized as mixed-ability groups which would include students who have special needs. The Ministry of Education and Culture started a campaign in order to improve mixed - ability classes so that participation at an equal level, focusing the marginalized groups can be ensured. Circulars highlighting the benefits of this policy were sent to the schools. At the same time the senior officials of the ministry organized seminars in order to promote an effective way of teaching in mixed-ability classes. Parallel to it, House of Parliament passed a new legislation on special education, which emphasized the rights of all the students which includes the children having special needs. According to it such children will be sent to the mainstream schools in their neighborhood and to attend the same classrooms with their age mates. In addition they will also be provided with the required support and the accommodation required by them to be included.

Azerbaijan has initiated to implement the “Step by Step” approach which encourages teachers to establish a differentiated instructional program that addresses an additional support to for the participation of students with special needs and to achieve their aspirations. The teachers facilitate children’s learning and promote inclusive learning by encouraging independent thinking, problem solving, and individual choice. Likewise the program seeks to ensure equal access to education for all children and encourages family and community participation in children's learning.

The Center for Innovation Education (CIE) in Azerbaijan which is a non-profit organization and works for the improvement of education, has launched a project which is known as Children with Disabilities in Azerbaijan. The project promotes sustainability of inclusive education. It has been funded by the Open society Institutes’ Early Childhood Program, and aims to develop the capacities of the teachers to involve the children with disabilities in the mainstream Kindergarten Education. Training modules have been adapted in the Azeri system of education and further enriched by a 5 year pilot project by the local teachers. The CIE project based upon their experiences has developed a course which has to be offered by the Azerbaijan State Pedagogical University. It was jointly developed by the academic staff of CIE and the academics at the university, particularly from the faculty of pedagogy and psychology. The faculty has an expertise in the preschool methodologies, remedial teaching and socio-psychological service in education.

The development of education in South Africa, which includes the education of children with disabilities has at the initial level followed the similar trends as in most other countries. There has been a lot of debate and the efforts to bring about the development of inclusive education as compared to other countries. After the advent of the Apartheid government in 1948 there has been a considerable influence on education in the country. Separate educational departments which were administered by the specific way of legislation strengthened the bifurcations in the education system.

The constitution since 1994 has increased the practice of inclusive education methodologies which has immensely affected the transformation of the pot-apartheid South Africa. As a result inclusive education within the context of South Africa has not been brought forward as another option for education, but as a methodology in order to contribute towards democratic society. Nevertheless the implementation of inclusive education has become a massive challenge after ten years of publication of the Salamanca Statement (UNESCO, 1994).

In order to implement the strategies of inclusive education it is quite necessary to keep into consideration the complex contextual influences that have taken place, the transformation of education and the shift from conceptualizing special needs within an individualistic deficits approach to needs towards a human rights approach within the social context. Changing the context of inclusive education in South Africa clearly underlines the inclusion is an epitome of a new democratic and a fair system of education over the Apartheid Education System. Policy change at a macro level cannot simply change the human behavior, values and attitudes. There is a need to shift the strategy towards educational strategy which will contribute towards inclusive education in a democratic society.

In Africa, the implementation of inclusive education has not been welcomed from most of the governments in the aspects of an adequate planning and the provision of resources. Type of inclusion practiced in Africa results in the isolation of the learners who need special guidance because there is a lack of support and resources. In India a nationwide inclusion scheme which was Integrated Education for Disabled Children (IEDC) was introduced in 1974 and had a very limited coverage. Many learners did not become the part of the programme because of scarcity of resources for the implementation of the programme.

In the context of Nigeria the needed educational material was not provided or were not according to the practices of inclusion. There was no staff who would be able to guide the teachers in the regular system of schools so that the students of disabilities can be made a part of the mainstream education. There was less interaction among disable and the non-disable peers and also with teachers. Students with disabilities at the primary level were socially discriminated as they just sat in the classrooms and did not participate in any of the activities outside the classroom. It has been observed that inadequate facilities, lack of support, the large size of the classes and the poor infrastructure are some of the challenges which impede the process of inclusion.

In many western countries the policies and legislation are very important to ensure an effective provision of facilities and which further gives way to a periodic monitoring of the activities. Furthermore policy making is very important for inclusive education. In China the support staff which are trained as vocational counsellors, work placement experts and evaluators cannot practice as there is a shortage of educational institutions which aid students with special needs.

Funding for many developing countries are very scarce and with the prevailing political and economic conditions the educational services are not sufficiently funded. According to a World Bank Report (1996) educational services were declining because of a glaring decrease in funding to the African countries.

In the domain of teacher development in Czech Republic a faculty member at a university in Prague has developed a one semester course which is called Basics of Inclusive Education. The particular course develops the teachers in terms of the philosophy of inclusive education and also acquaints with the application of various theories of inclusive education within schools. Likewise they also take part in research activities which aim to help in developing the didactic approach in teaching. They also participate in the project called Models of Inclusive Practice, which examine the fact that how schools are creating an environment so that the needs of the students with disabilities are catered. The program further focuses awareness on diversity, survival among

heterogeneous groups, to strengthen the skills of the teachers to promote inclusion to generate exchange of good experience and discussion furthermore, to document the good practices in inclusive education.

5. Conclusion

It is very essential with the aim to ensure inclusive education by providing a conducive environment which would encourage the inclusion of children with disabilities in the mainstream education. As there is a lack of awareness there is a strong need for awareness raising among the mainstream students and the teachers on inclusive education. In addition as the teachers are not specialized in dealing with students with disabilities which is a major shortcoming for the teachers to implement inclusion of all kinds of students in their classrooms. Students with disabilities are faced with discrimination as they are not made part of the activities being carried out in the classroom and for the reason are unable to socialize with their non-disable peers.

There is also a requirement of adequate facilities for implementing inclusive education. The needs of the students with disabilities cannot be dealt with if their mobility is not ensured. Until the issue of inaccessibility is not addressed by the management, such students will remain to be deprived of their right to mainstream education. This may include various practices dealing with the nature and the type of disability they are faced with. Another important consideration is the remuneration of the management and the teachers, as they can show dedication towards all students if they are motivated that they will be compensated for their efforts.

Students with disabilities desire to get mainstreamed as they want to be considered like other non-disable peers. For this they need to be made a part of various activities taking place in the class. This will eliminate the feeling of social out casting and let them be taken seriously and by others in the class room environment. Teachers can mainstream the students with disabilities in the regular education system who are not severely challenged but face minor disabilities which can be managed. They consider an obligation as a socially responsible individual of the society to work for inclusive education provided if they are being trained. Besides the teaching methodology does not focus the students with disabilities due to which such students cannot follow the instructions in the class. Hence the teaching methodology needs to be designed in accordance with the requirements addressing issues of inclusion. Students with disabilities want to pursue careers in their future but are restricted to the prevailing regular system of education

The management and teachers can take certain initiatives to ensure the implementation of inclusive education both in rural and urban areas. Until any steps for inclusion are not initiated in the schools, students with disabilities cannot become a part of the regular educational system in the country.

In the context of academics, this study is more important and will serve to be a considerable contribution. It would raise questions regarding the implementation of inclusive education in schools of Pakistan. At an international level there has been a campaign on inclusive education but in Pakistan the teachers and students both are not yet aware of its implications. There are certain disabilities which are not highly challenging and children with such disabilities can be mainstreamed in the regular system of education.

A lot of research is still required to be conducted in terms of implementation of inclusive education by the

academicians specifically in the context of Pakistan. There is much more which needs to be explored in terms of inclusion focusing various other aspects.

6. Limitations of the Study

During the research a major limitation was the unavailability of the students with disabilities in the mainstream school. In the Pakistani context it is rare to find such students in the regular educational system and there is a strong requirement to implement inclusive education.

The children who have severe disabilities and are intellectually challenged cannot be mainstreamed in regular educational institutions. For this reason children with every kind of disability cannot be made inclusive in the mainstream education so the study is limited to students with minor disabilities.

In the rural context it was difficult to make the respondents understand the importance of the research as they were not aware with the concept of inclusion of students with disabilities in the mainstream education. More amount of time and effort was required to make them understand the significance of inclusive education. Consequently the data was collected depending upon their limited knowledge on the subject.

7. Recommendations

For inclusive education the accessibility of students towards the educational institutions holds a key importance and for the purpose the management of the schools need to play a vigorous role. There should be sign boards outside the schools to facilitate the children with disabilities. Inside the premises there should also be sign indications so that not the students with disabilities, their non-disable peers and the staff are sensitized about the needs of inclusive children.

The management of the schools in mainstream education of Pakistan need to work on the aspect of inclusive education. The teachers are not yet aware of the true meaning of the term inclusion and there is a need of teachers' awareness and for the purpose they are required to be imparted with trainings focusing the aspect of the inclusion in schools. The very basic initiative any institution can take is to equip their staff primarily the teachers on inclusive education so that children with disabilities can be accommodated in the mainstream classrooms and to serve the purpose training modules on inclusive education can be developed for teachers' training in the mainstream schools. The modules can be developed catering to the needs of the students with disabilities and to impart education accordingly with the assistance of non-profit organizations or experts on inclusion. Additionally, Information, Education and Communication (IEC) Material pertaining to inclusion can also be developed and disseminated in schools, communities and civil society in order to raise awareness and to advocate the implementation of inclusion in schools of Pakistan.

Advocacy can be carried out in different ways through holding speaking forums, debate competitions in schools particularly on the issue of inclusive education in the context of Pakistan. In addition radio programmes can also be broadcasted in which teachers and students can voice their opinion on this issue.

The students can also be sensitized on inclusion which can inculcate in them to eliminate discrimination of such students. They can be further informed that such children are like other peers and not different, hence should be dealt with cordially expressing a sense of companionship with them. They should not be made to realize that they have any disability rather they have their own strengths which can be a contribution to the society. Such children are blessed and can compete their peers in every walk of life. In the classroom the teachers should be well versed in meeting the behavioural dilemmas faced by inclusive children in the class.

A comprehensive programme must be put into place for inclusive education which should focus the aspects as mentioned ahead. The students should be served at an equal level which implies the fact that the mainstream students and the students with disabilities should be treated alike without any discrimination. This can be implemented by facilitating all kinds of students effectively by including them in groups which would enable all the children to recognize each other's strengths and weaknesses.

The students can also be assisted in their social, educational and career counselling. At schools the students with disabilities should be provided with facilitation for their problems which they face in the society. They should be provided with quality education keeping in mind their educational needs, besides they can be provided with counselling to choose their career in future.

Peer tutoring among the students should be encouraged so that the inclusive children can get support from their peers in terms of their educational issues. This would promote favourable environment among the students with disabilities so that they do not feel hesitant in sharing their problems.

The awareness of not only the teachers but also the parents /guardians of the inclusive children regarding the importance of inclusive education should also be implemented. Moreover the personnel and management at the school should also be imparted with awareness raising sessions so that they are also sensitized on the challenges faced by the students with disabilities.

Inclusive children can participate in extracurricular activities such as speaking contest, sports etc. There are such students who are good speakers or are good in sports. E.g. In Cricket inclusive children can be good in roles of umpires and fielders depending upon their type of disability. In addition in the class room settings the inclusive children should be involved in group activities with their peers so that they are included in the mainstream and are not discriminated. One of the indoor activities which is quite beneficial in instilling the confidence among all the students is of role playing. Such role playing sessions can be designed which can help all the students including the students with disabilities so that they get involved with their peers and are able to increase their level of confidence.

The inclusive students can be provided with transport facilities along with other students so that they do not feel discriminated and start their day mingling with other non-disable students. This would also enable the peers of inclusive children to accept them as the part of the society and to accommodate them in the mainstream environment. If an encouraging environment is provided to the students with disabilities the amount of bullying by their peers can be reduced.

Capacity building of the teachers can be carried out considering the disabilities which can be dealt within the mainstream education. The training of the teachers may focus various aspects of inclusion and the teaching methodologies which would enable the inclusion of students with disabilities in the regular education system.

A strategy can be designed which can be based on innovative methods to be introduced for the inclusive students. After the designing of the methodology they should be practised in the schools and finally the evaluation of the established system can also be ensured. This would allow to assess the learning outcomes of students with disabilities.

Linkages with Community Based Rehabilitation (CBR) Asia Pacific network need to be developed which can help the institutions in providing guidance for ways to social inclusion of Students with disabilities. In addition would also guide to capitalize the utilization and maximization of available resources. CBR is focused upon as its thematic areas to enhance the lives of the people with disabilities and also their families in order to fulfill their basic needs.

Linkages with funding associations can benefit the educational institutions to ensure the implementation of inclusive education. The educational institutions after understanding the meaning and significance of inclusion will be able to develop proposals to put forth for their needs for the task. This can help in justifying their needs to generate the necessary funds to various donor and philanthropist associations which aim to fund such interventions.

The academicians can identify the challenges faced during the process of inclusive education and can propose recommendations to make it an effective practice. They can also raise awareness among their colleagues and students in order to disseminate the concept of inclusive education which can also be helpful for its implementation.

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